The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting and concerning the industrial, legislative, and political fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WHOLE NO. 1732 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, JUNE 20, 1944 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 34, NO. 25

WE PLEDGE—
1 BILLION DOLLARS
IN WAR SAVINGS BONDS
FOR VICTORY

FACING the FACTS

With PHILIP PEARL

Now that the first flush of excitement over the invasion of Nazi-occupied Europe has died down, it becomes increasingly clear that the war has not been won yet. Not by a long shot. Progress in the fighting along the beachheads of Normandy has been painfully slow, especially when one regards the vast distances still to be traversed before we can attack Hitler in his own lair.

We voice these words of caution not in a despondent spirit but in an attempt to kill any wild rumors that may be circulated among war workers to the effect that the production program is about to be cut away down. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The gigantic flood of fighting equipment and supplies that has poured from assembly lines in this country to our bases in England during the past two years is now in action against Hitler's troops. According to despatches from the fighting fronts, the impact of invasion already has depleted these supplies. Much of our finest equipment was destroyed or knocked out or sunk in the first phases of the invasion. All of it, the War Department reports, must be replaced if our troops are to maintain full fighting strength and be in a position to continue their advances.

What Hit the Nazis

The power which the Germans have only begun to feel was created by labor on the home production front. That power must be sustained and invigorated by huge amounts of replacements and reserve supplies.

To convey an idea of what is still needed, we might well attempt to describe what hit the Germans on the coast of France.

First was the greatest fleet of military aircraft ever assembled for an offensive. Day and night, thousands of American and British bombers hammered the coastal defences of the Nazis, blasting gun emplacements and fortifications and terrorizing Hitler's picked troops who were assigned to guard the beaches. And when the time came to launch the attack, 11,000 American and British planes were thrown into the assault. In one day, these planes flew 27,000 sorties, using up thousands of tons of bombs, countless rounds of ammunition and vast quantities of 100-octane gasoline. This, mind you, was just a single day's operations. From now on Allied air activity will be constantly stepped up. Imagine how rapidly these air fleets are going to eat up supplies!

The invasion itself was spearheaded by another enormous fleet of naval vessels and auxiliary ships. Landing craft, built by thousands of workers many laborious weeks to build, were sunk or stranded in a matter of moments. Obviously, the Allied strategy calls for more landings in the future, both in Europe and in the Pacific. Thus the production program will have to be maintained at full blast.

Far above the troop-laden ships flew transports of the air, carrying paratroopers who descended perilously behind the Nazi lines to seize vital bridges and roads and disorganize resistance. These transports numbered more than three times the total of planes operated by commercial air lines in the United States before the war, in itself a tribute to the productivity of American labor, as the War Department points out.

An Optimistic Prophecy

The guns, tanks, amphibious vehicles, trucks, half-tracks and bull-dozers which were rolled up the beaches were by the blood of our ground troops were too numerous to be counted. Much of this equipment was knocked out and even yet litters the Normandy shoreline. Already the War Production Board has sent out new orders for expanded war production.

Radio equipment, produced in vast quantities by American workers and including many items still closely guarded as military secrets, performed effectively in the crucial battles. Much more of this equipment, which is high on the priority list, will be required before final victory is won.

Millions of tons of food, clothing and medical supplies were delivered on time to the beachheads. Naturally, more supplies must be rushed in as soon as they can be produced and transported.

We have listed only a few of the many items which go to war with our troops, items which are highly expendable and which must be replaced promptly and in full measure if we hope to defeat Hitler.

Prime Minister Churchill in British predicts that this goal may be reached before the end of the summer. We sincerely pray that this prophecy will be as accurate as most of his past forecasts. But as long as the fighting continues—in Asia as well as in Europe—our armed forces will need the precious equipment which labor is producing in record-breaking amounts on the home front. And as long as American soldiers and sailors need supplies, it is up to labor to keep producing them steadily and surely.

No matter how long it takes, the workers of America intend to fulfill this duty like the true soldiers of production they have proved themselves to be.

Labor And Clergy Join To Defeat Two Anti-Union Bills In Louisiana

Baton Rouge, La.—Organized labor in this state won a major victory with the overwhelming rejection by the legislature of two bills, designed to shackle the workers, which were sponsored by the misnamed "Christian American Association."

One was a bill with sweeping controls aimed at crippling unions, similar to measures already adopted in several Southern states. It received the eight support of the legislature for a so-called "freedom to work" amendment to the state constitution which would outlaw all "union shop" agreements in the state.

Both were met by the solid opposition, not only of organized labor, but of a committee of clergymen representing all faiths—Catholic, Protestant and Jewish. When the measures came up for hearings before the legislative committees, the unionists and clergymen were on hand in force, and they gave a splendid account of themselves both in oral and written statements.

Lobbyists of the "Christian American" outfit, who had been working for the measures for months, left the city, but didn't even dare appear in the open at the hearings.

The result was a smashing defeat for the repressive measures. One was buried by a 6-to-2 majority, and the other by 8 to 0.

Among those who led the fight against the bills was Father Jerome A. Drolet, connected with St. Matthias Church in New Orleans. He hailed the committee action as a "notable victory" against "unjust, un-American, immoral and disruptive legislation."

This was the second drubbing administered by the Louisiana legislature to the "Christian Americans." Several years ago the legislature became alarmed at the activities of that organization that it adopted a resolution asking the FBI to investigate the outfit to learn if it is financed by enemy sources to spread hate in this country.

National Commander Atherton Hit By Union Labor Legionnaires

Chicago.—Strong condemnation of the anti-union policies pursued by the ruling powers of the American Legion was voiced at the two-day National Conference of Union Labor Legionnaires here. More than a hundred delegates from 212 trade union Legion posts attended.

Brunt of the attack fell upon National Commander Warren Atherton for his advocacy of draft-labor legislation and for his refusal to seat members of the Legion's National Labor Relations Committee to the meeting.

Edward Ahrens, representing the Chicago Federation of Labor, declared that the way to make "men like Atherton understand that we veterans are not impressed with his policies," is for union members who have served in uniform to "join the Legion and make ourselves heard."

Resolutions adopted at the conference declared the "deliberate attempt of anti-union forces" to smear labor's war record, called for constructive post-war policies and liberal provisions for veterans of this war and supported full collaboration among the United Nations to bring about lasting peace after victory.

ORDNANCE PRODUCTION SHOWS HUGE INCREASE

Washington, D. C.—Monthly production of naval torpedoes by American workers is now greater than the entire World War I output, while manufacture of all other ordnance materials continues to make marked increases under the Bureau of Ordnance's program, the Navy Department announced.

Aircraft, submarine and surface ship torpedoes ranged and lusted during 1943 showed an increase of 250 percent over 1942, and 720 percent over 1941, while production in December, 1943, increased 900 percent over December, 1941.

BLS Admits Its Index Gives Faulty View Of True Rise In Living Cost

Washington, D. C.—The Bureau of Labor Statistics officially admitted in a release on June 16 that its index "does not show the full wartime effect on the cost of living."

Hailing this confession of the truth, AFL Secretary-Treasurer George Meany declared that the BLS index no longer can be considered a yardstick for the restriction of wage rates.

As a member of the War Labor Board, Mr. Meany made it clear that organized labor will now renew its drive for realistic wage adjustments to meet the factual and heavy increases in living costs not reflected by the BLS index.

The Department of Labor's refreshing avowal of the inadequacy of the BLS index came after Mr. Meany and other labor spokesmen had exposed the injustice of using the BLS figures as a guide to computing living costs and as a basis for establishing wage rates. The official statement said:

"The BLS index indicates average changes in retail prices of selected goods, rents and services bought by families of wage earners and lower-salaried workers in large cities. The items covered represented 70 percent of the expenditures of families who had incomes ranging from $1250 to $2000 in 1934-36.

"The index does not show the full wartime effect on the cost of living of such factors as lowered quality, disappearance of low-priced goods and forced changes in housing and eating away from home.

"It does not measure changes in total 'living costs'—that is, in the total amount families spend for living. Income taxes and bond subscriptions are not included."

AFL Members Proud of Their Work, Pledge Many More Superfortresses

Washington, D. C.—All America was thrilled by the spectacular bombing of Japan by the long-range Superfortresses, but no one got as big a kick out of the news as the thousands of AFL workers who make these giants of the air.

In Boeing plants at Seattle, Wichita and other sections of the country where the Superfortresses are in production, AFL workers pledged themselves to increase output of the world's biggest, newest and most powerful bombing plane.

Millions of words were printed in the newspapers in praise of the great Superfortresses, but few monitored the fact that the skill and genius of union workers made them possible.

One of the few exceptions was Under Secretary of War Robert P. Patterson, who said:

"The bombing of the islands of Japan by our new Superfortresses, the B-29, is just a beginning. We will strike at the heart of Japan again and again. The Superfortresses are a product of American labor and industrial genius and are a very tangible example of the partnership existing between those laboring on the home front and the armed forces in the active theaters of war."

Congress Extends Food Subsidies; Debates Inflationary OPA Changes

Washington, D. C.—Senate and House conferees agreed upon extending Federal food subsidies for another year but were still hotly debating amendments to a bill which threaten to bring about inflationary increases in prices of many articles.

In a last-minute appeal to Congress, AFL President William Green urged renewal of the Price Control Act without any of these destructive amendments. He said:

"More disruptive to war production, morale and productive capacity than any other event on the home front since the beginning of the war is the series of price-raising and profit seeking amendments to the Price Control Act proposed in Congress in the last few days.

"While American soldiers are fighting on the beachheads of Normandy, their families at home are threatened with being pauperized by rising prices; while the great mass of the American public is investing every available dollar in the Fifth War Loan Drive, the very value of the bonds is being placed in jeopardy by these inflationary proposals; while American workers are joining in the greatest concerted production drive mankind has ever made, they are confronted with another upward cost of living spiral.

"Cost of living control is not a partisan issue but a war issue. American labor regards every amendment designed to raise prices or weaken price enforcement as an act inimical to the winning of the war. The workers of America, their families and friends will mark and will remember every move made to raise prices and thwart price enforcement, for every such move is bound to weaken our nation's power to win."

Metal Trades Demand Wage Revisions In Shipyards, As Pledged By NWLB

Washington, D. C.—AFL unions in the shipbuilding industry, including the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, rejected demands that the government redeem its pledge to shipyard workers to keep their wages abreast of living costs.

An initial step in that direction was taken by the Shipbuilding Stabilization Committee, on demand of its labor members. The committee, composed of labor, industry and government representatives, adopted a resolution calling upon the National War Labor Board to approve a review of the wages paid to the nation's 1,500,000 shipbuilding employes.

President John P. Frey of the AFL Metal Trades Department made it clear the unions will fight for a substantial wage increase.

They are entitled to it under the terms of their stabilization agreements negotiated with the industry at the beginning of the war, Frey pointed out. And the unions intend to fight for adjustments in line with the rise in living costs.

In the middle of 1942, at bargaining conferences, the unions settled for a smaller increase than the agreements called for, in return for an Administration promise that, if it failed to "hold the line" on living costs, further raises would be granted.

"Last year we asked the War Labor Board to fulfill that promise, since living costs had continued to skyrocket," Frey said. "The board refused to do so. Since then, prices have gone up further. We think it's time now for the government to live up to its solemn pledge."

The unions will insist when the War Labor Board opens its wage review, in compliance with the Stabilization Committee's request, Frey declared. Hearings by the board on the subject are expected to open soon.

Meanwhile, the Stabilization Committee also announced that a labor-management-government zone conference covering shipyards in the Gulf area will be held within the next few weeks. The conference will consider improvements in working conditions demanded by the unions.

Your Bonds Now Buy More

Washington, D. C.—A year ago when a group of workers decided to buy enough bonds to finance the purchase of a heavy bomber, they had to raise $500,000. Today, the same bomber can be purchased for half that amount, the War Department reports.

Why? Because both plants and workers have developed an efficiency of operation traceable to experience and because costs have gone down as production went up.

So the same union war workers who have led all other groups in bond purchases are partly responsible for the increased purchasing power of these bonds. The suggestions for improving and speeding production that war workers have made have done much to lower these costs.

News Briefs

GREEN WILL PRESENT AFL'S PLATFORM PLANKS

Chicago.—AFL President William Green will appear before the Resolutions Committee of the Republican National Convention here on June 23 to present labor's recommendations for planks to be included in the party's 1944 platform.

In conformance with the AFL's non-partisan policies, Mr. Green also will present the platform recommendations to the Resolutions Committee of the Democratic National Convention when it meets here July 19.

To acquaint the entire country with the policies which the American Federation of Labor wants Congress and the states to adopt, Mr. Green will discuss recommendations in detail on the "Labor For Victory" radio program over a nation-wide NBC network on June 25. This will be the final Labor For Victory program until after Election Day.

AFL MEN IN UNIFORM READ 'FEDERATIONIST'

Washington, D. C.—The extent to which members of the American Federation of Labor are serving in the armed forces is sharply illustrated in the following extract from a letter sent to AFL Legislative Representative Lewis G. Hines by Sgt. Edward J. Finegan, member of the AFL State, County and Municipal Employes Union, now somewhere in North Africa:

"Mr. Hines, when I started this letter there were seven soldiers in the tent with me and out of that seven, five were members of the American Federation of Labor, so you know that the magazine you send me (American Federationist) has done some in handy. These boys like to read it and they know what goes on and all are men that have seen action."

Don't you think it would be worthwhile to follow Mr. Hines' example and send your copy of the American Federationist to some member of the armed forces who would like to read it?

UNION LABEL BROADCAST

Washington, D. C.—An interesting and educational talk on the "Union Label—Emblem of American Standards," will be broadcast by I. M. Ornburn, Secretary-Treasurer of the Union Label Trades Department over the Mutual network from coast to coast on July 6 from 11:15 to 11.30, P.M., E.W.T.

UNION REPORT SEEN ON WHEEL OF ACHIEVEMENT

Boston.—A novel way of presenting a union report was adopted by the Cotton Garment and Miscellaneous Trades Department of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union at the union's recent convention here.

Each delegate received a cleverly contrived "wheel of achievement." By turning this wheel, delegates could see at a glance figures giving membership increases, wage rises, bond purchases and other pertinent information in regard to each local union and each region.

SHIPS BUILT BY LABOR VITAL FACTOR IN WAR

Washington, D. C—The Navy and Merchant Marine that American workers built in record time "have made it possible for us to turn from the defensive to the offensive in every theater of operations," according to Assistant Secretary of the Navy Ralph A. Bard.

Credit for the part shipyard workers are playing in the war was emphasized when the Assistant Secretary said they had placed our armed forces in the "present favorable position they occupy around the globe" and that "when the history of the war is fully written, this ardeals of vessels will be judged one of the most vital factors in setting the future of the world."

IMPORTANT INVASION ROLE PERFORMED BY SEABEES

Washington, D. C.—The Germans are learning about the Seabees the same way the Japs did—the hard way. The Navy has now revealed how the versatile Seabees, most of them recruited from organized labor, constructed the many U. S. Navy amphibious bases which supported our forces attacking the continent.

In record time the Seabees took over thousands of acres of British land, occupied scores of harbors to turn them into advanced amphibious operating bases, supply depots and maintenance units from which U. S. Naval vessels carried the Allied Army to European beaches.

Invasion News Peps Up War Production; Absenteeism Drops, Nelson Reveals

Ten Constructive Benefits To War Effort Found In Official Survey Of Workers' Response To D-Day Challenge

Washington, D. C.—Advances on the war production front are keeping pace with progress on the invasion fronts, WPB Chairman Donald M. Nelson announced after an official survey.

The survey, he said, showed that the landings in France proved a "shot in the arm" to the war effort on the home front. He listed these constructive benefits:

1. There is a "new invasion spirit" on the home front and the tension of waiting and wondering has lifted, with consequent benefits to war output.

2. Employe morals and production have been stimulated through fewer line dispatches which mention specific equipment in action, such as landing craft, sky trains, tanks and planes. Everywhere, plant workers are confident that their products are now "in on the invasion" and will be a part of it.

3. The upsurge should be reflected soon in new production records.

4. There has been a definite drop in absenteeism, with many Labor-Management Committees reporting specific cuts running as high as 50 percent. This has been reported from every section of the country.

5. There are some specific examples of a lessening of the labor turnover problem, with fewer workers asking for release. It is too early to judge whether this is an indicative trend.

6. There have been some instances of a greater willingness by non-workers, chiefly women, to seek war plant employment.

7. Practically every Labor-Management Committee conducted some sort of D-plant prayer service on D-Day. There were "no demonstrations but a sober determination." Many plants held mass rallies, highlighted by prayers and renewed production pledges. War bulletins are being issued throughout most plants.

8. Most Labor-Management Committees were preparing their Fifth War Loan Drives when D-Day came, and workers "jumped the gun." Every region reports plants where purchases rose, sometimes doubling and tripling previous records.

9. Red Cross blood donor drives were being conducted by many Labor-Management Committees when invasion came, and here, too, there was a tremendous increase in interest, with goals quickly met and surpassed.

10. Many regularly-scheduled Labor-Management Committee meetings held during invasion week pledged themselves to meet production quotas and mapped plans to concentrate on new production drives. In some instances, workers voluntarily requested and mapped plans to concentrate on new production drives. In some instances, workers voluntarily requested additional hours in their schedules.

The survey, which is representative of the nation's 8,656 Labor-Management Committee governing 2,300,000 workers, was conducted chiefly through interviews by regional and district managers of the War Production Drive.

Union To Buy $2,000,000 In War Bonds To Replace Sunk S. S. Meyer London

New York City.—Dressmakers Union Local 22, of the ILGWU, decided to raise $2,000,000 in the Fifth War Loan in order to replace the Liberty Ship, S. S. Meyer London, recently torpedoed in the Mediterranean. The Meyer London was one of the four ships supplied to the government with the $8,000,000 contributed by the New York dressmakers in the course of the Third War Loan.

Charles S. Zimmerman, manager of the union, said:

"Our heroic armies on the invasion coast are not stopped or disheartened by the severe losses they suffer. With invincible determination they quickly replace their losses and drive forward to victory. We too are determined to make up for the lost ship.

"We are determined to replace the lost ship just as quickly as possible and to do our bit to keep the stream of supplies and munitions running to our boys on the battlefronts. The Executive Board has therefore decided to raise at least $2,000,000 in the present Fifth War Loan and calls upon our membership to increase their purchase of additional bonds to make up this amount. We are requesting the government to earmark these funds for another Liberty Ship to take the place of the S. S. Meyer London, and to be called by the same name."

Labor To Have Voice In WPB Councils On Cutbacks And Production Shifts

Washington, D. C.—Labor union representatives will be consulted before final orders are issued for cutbacks or other serious changes in war production schedules under a new system adopted by the War Production Board.

The important forward step was taken by the WPB at an Office of Labor Advisory Committees, through which unions will be permitted a direct voice in the determination of production programs before they are made effective.

The order for the new setup was signed by WPB Chairman Donald M. Nelson after a spirited controversy within the board in which Vice Chairman C. E. Wilson took issue with the broad scope of the setup proposed by Joseph Keenan, Labor Vice Chairman.

Mr. Wilson sought to have the order affect only such matters as absenteeism and turnover. Labor spokesmen insisted that they must also be permitted to advise on all matters affecting production since they are in every problem of production was of direct interest to labor.

The Office of Labor Production, under the Nelson order, is set up in the office of Mr. Keenan who is vice chairman of the War Production Board.

The order states that Mr. Keenan and Vice Chairman Golden in charge of manpower requirements, shall, in consultation with the other WPB vice chairmen, jointly establish plans and policies and general methods to guide industry divisions in discharging their functions with respect to the use of labor advisory committees.

The functions of the labor advisory committees, it was said, would include consideration of problems affecting the war production program, the furnishing of information and reports to WPB officers and the review and recommendations based on proposed orders and programs.

When a proposed order, in the opinion of Messrs. Keenan and Golden, would result in substantial curtailment of production or in expansion or other change in the rate of production of an industry, the labor vice chairmen are permitted to recommend to the director of an industry division consultation with appropriate labor advisory committee.

In this way, it was felt by the labor representatives that cutbacks and programs affecting industrial production would receive the scrutiny of labor before changes are made.

The order points out that the intention of the formation of the new committees is to obtain the assistance of labor in the solution of all WPB problems and to provide for maximum cooperation between government and labor in the execution of official programs.

ORNBURN WARNS AGAINST SUBSTITUTE FOR LABEL

Washington, D. C.—I. M. Ornburn, Secretary-Treasurer, Union Label Trades Department of the American Federation of Labor, warns that a large American shoe manufacturer is now placing the words, "Union Made," in shoes in place of the Union Label. This crafty method is often used by non-union manufacturers of products that may be manufactured by a company where any other union is affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, he pointed out. He urged all AFL members to demand the official Union Stamp of the Boot and Shoe Workers' Union on footwear.

"It will be necessary," Mr. Ornburn added, "to demand the Union Label on all products and the Union Shop Card and Service Button for all services during the war if trade unionists expect to maintain American labor standards after the war."

IBEW WINS ELECTION IN LARGE UTILITY UNIT

Washington, D. C.—Another large unit of a major midwest utility, the Appalachian Electric Company of Illinois, was brought under the banner of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

The IBEW defeated a "company union" in the generating and substation departments at Chicago by a sweeping majority of 907 to 500. In the second unit the election ended in a stalemate, partly because some employes eligible to vote, were prevented to cast ballots. As a result the National Labor Relations Board ordered a new election in that unit.

The Electrical Workers also announced that raises totaling over $20,000 annually, plus back wages running up to $300 per employe, had been won for traffic, commercial and plant department workers of the Virginia Telephone and Telegraph Company. The increases were approved by the National War Labor Board over the stiff opposition of the company.